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News From Our Local Churches - May



Church Staff Takes Peek at Renovation

April 27, 2011, Rev. Dwight Andrews, pastor of First Congregational Church UCC, Atlanta, Bette Graves Thomas, Church Administrator and Secretary of the conference Board of Directors, and Technical Director, Dan Fishman, were given a brief, escorted tour of the church renovation work. They walked through the ground floor and saw the new Fellowship Hall space with its level floor and high ceiling. Upstairs, they walked into the Sanctuary space and saw the raised, concrete platform that will become the new pulpit, chancel, and choir area. The window openings on the back wall will be filled-in, and a new back wall to the chancel area will be built.

As she observed the old church building exposed and the design of the renovated church emerging, Bette exclaimed, "...it just takes my breath away!" Bette is a lifelong member of First Church and grew-up in the historic church at the corner of Houston (now John Wesley Dobbs Avenue) and Courtland Streets. The Building Renovation Committee is planning short, guided tours of the church renovation in May for interested church members.



Reception as Member Church into the United Church of Christ

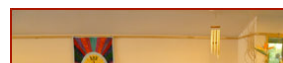
Peace Congregational UCC, in Clemson SC celebrated their reception as a member church into the United Church of Christ on Sunday, May 8, 2011 at a 5:00 p.m. worship service. Almost 60 individuals signed as charter members. Led by



of Peace Church, led the congregation in the Affirmation of Covenant. Rev.

Susie Smith welcomed Rev. Susannah M. Davis, pastor of Kirkwood UCC, Atlanta, who

Pastor Susie Smith, Peace UCC has ground breaking ministries in upcountry South Carolina reaching out to GLBT youth and modeling a "love of our mother earth." Tim Downs, Conference Minister, and Rev. Allen Mullinax, Chair of Church and Ministry for the Georgia-South Carolina Association, led the congregation in the Covenant litany and prayers. Dianne King, Moderator



delivered the sermon. The Georgia South Carolina Association is extremely proud to welcome this new church into a covenanted partnership with bonds of grace and love. A pot luck dinner followed the service.



First Congregational Talladega Recognized as Historical Landmark

On Sunday, May 15th, 2011, First Congregational United Church of Christ of Talladega, AL celebrated its 143rd Anniversary and Dedicatory Services as a State of Alabama Historic Landmark. Several dignitaries, guests, and friends and family of the congregation were in attendance, including Dr. Billy Hawkins, President of Talladega College, as well as representatives of local government, the Alabama Historic Commission, and the Amistad Research Center of Tulane University. Kathy Clark, Associate Conference Minister, represented the Southeast Conference and offered remarks at the unveiling of the historic landmark. Rev. Arthur Price, Jr., pastor of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, Birmingham, AL, supported by the church's Praise Team, was the keynote preacher. Ms. Sadie Currie led the committee that secured the historic landmark status. The Historic Landmark Marker reads:



The Community House - In 1867, the American Missionary Association helped establish Talladega College. Reverend Henry E. Brown served as the first principal of the school. On May 17, 1868, Rev. Brown established the First Congregational Church with 17 members. Between 1868 and 1927, they worshipped in DeForest Chapel at Talladega College. The Trustees of the

First Congregational Church of Talladega incorporated the church in 1908. In 1928, community volunteers constructed the church's first building in ten weeks. Known as the Community House, they dedicated it as the First Congregational Church of Talladega on February 27, 1927. This site is listed in the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage.

Congratulations to our sisters and brothers of the First Congregational UCC in Talladega!

A Reverse Mission Trip

Rebecca Shillingburg, member of **Church of the Savior**, Roswell, GA reports that the church is co-sponsoring a Burmese refugee family. COS will share their experiences with us in the coming months. This is their first co-sponsorship (or as Tom likes to say, a **"reverse mission trip"**). Monday Rebecca showed Hser Gay (the mom) how to vacuum while Ku Kuh (the dad) was going to RRISA. **What an experience!** [Link here to read more of the story.](#)

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